

HANDOUT #9

Reformation Fellowship

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SYNOPSIS

***Galatians* , PART 7**

[Gal. 3:6–14]

¶12 > The fulfilled condition that will qualify an individual to inherit the blessing that was promised to Abraham and his children is belief in and identification with Jesus. [Gal. 3:6–9]

¶13 > Those who practice obedience to the Law—no less than any other human being—are under the curse of Adam. They are deserving of death and destruction, their Law-obedience notwithstanding. If they are to be freed from the death and destruction they deserve, they must receive mercy. Now *Habakkuk* 2:4 makes it clear that obedience to the Law is not a necessary condition for being granted mercy (and that Law-obedience is not the basis upon which God will grant mercy), for *Habakkuk* 2:4 suggests that believing the promises of God—and that alone—is sufficient to qualify a person for God’s mercy. Jesus became the basis upon which God will grant mercy when he subjected himself to his tortured death on the cross in order that God might—in his death—depict for mankind what their curse truly requires. Anyone who believes in God’s promised blessing qualifies to receive God’s mercy and the blessing that God promised on the basis of Jesus, in that—because of his belief—he belongs to and is identified with Jesus the Messiah. [Gal. 3:10–14]

Comparison of the Contrasting Views of Paul and His Opponents in Galatia

Presumably, Paul’s opponents in Galatia believe that:	In the paragraphs summarized above, Paul states that:
Obedience to the Law of Moses in conjunction with being a follower of Jesus the Messiah are the fulfilled conditions that qualify a person to receive eternal Life, the blessing of Abraham.	Genuine inward openness to believe God’s promise of mercy and a blessing—and that alone—is the fulfilled condition that qualifies a person to receive eternal Life, the blessing of Abraham.
Obedience to the Law of Moses is pleasing to God to such an extent that the curse of death and destruction to which that person is otherwise subject is nullified and revoked because of his Law-obedience.	It is <i>not</i> the case that obedience to the Law of Moses is pleasing to God to such an extent that the curse of death and destruction to which that person is otherwise subject is nullified and revoked because of his Law-obedience.
Under the terms of the Mosaic Covenant, doing what the Law requires serves as the condition under which God will grant mercy to an individual, because his obedience to the Law is a manifestation of that individual’s <i>righteousness</i> or <i>goodness</i> .	Under the terms of the Mosaic Covenant, doing what the Law requires serves as the condition under which God will grant mercy to an individual, because his obedience to the Law is a manifestation of that individual’s <i>belief</i> (that is, of his openness to believe God’s promise of mercy and blessing—akin to the <i>belief</i> of Abraham).
Obedience to the Law is—or, at least, contributes to—the <i>basis</i> upon which God will grant mercy and the blessing of Abraham.	Identification with and real connection to Jesus—the <i>messiah</i> —is the only <i>basis</i> upon which God will grant mercy and the blessing of Abraham.
Because obedience to the Law is not practiced by Gentiles, Gentile Jesus-followers who live as Gentiles cannot possibly be granted God’s mercy and the blessing of Abraham.	Because identification with and real connection to Jesus—the <i>messiah</i> —is possible for Gentiles as surely as it is for Jews, then Gentile Jesus-followers who live as Gentiles can be granted God’s mercy and the blessing of Abraham.